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ABSTRACT

Industry representatives and academicians alike have long recognized that many business school graduates lack the international business management skills that have become critical since the expansion of global markets. One proposal to address this lack is to have U.S. liberal arts programs incorporate international business elements into their programs. The following models for internationalizing the business curriculum have been identified: (1) develop a freshman course in international business; (2) establish a series of courses focusing on global issues; and (3) integrate international topics into existing courses. The following are among the suggestions for internationalizing business education programs that were identified through a review of the literature and educational practices at various U.S. colleges and universities: (1) encourage U.S. businesses with global expertise to help universities with their programs; (2) provide government support for internationalizing the business curriculum; (3) have the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business take a more active role in setting business school standards and evaluating schools; (4) incorporate more activities focusing on world and cultural geography and global history into the business curriculum; (5) feature internationalism as a stand-alone course and/or introduce it as a specific topic in established business courses; and (6) link into international business chat rooms. (Contains 16 references.) (MN)

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International Business–What Can We Do?

By

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Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for MBE 600 Current Literature in Business Education

Southern New Hampshire University, BNAS
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Presented to
Dr. Thomas Hancock
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LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The issue of business school graduates, who lack international business management skills, has been long recognized from both industry and academicians. The need for international expertise is great especially since the expansion of global markets of Eastern European and Asia and the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA). Ahmed (1994) proposes that U.S. liberal arts education can employ international business elements into their programs, thus reducing the costs and efforts that prevent the expansion of international business education development as stand alone programs. He cites the deficit of foreign language study at the university level as a component of this. The American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the accrediting body for schools of business, supports international business curriculum and continues to demand the study of global business concepts in its programs. In 2000, this body added "The ***International*** Association for Management Education" to their name to emphasize its broader approach (Fugate and Jefferson 2001). Groennings (1990) writes of three models for internationalizing business curriculum-developing a freshmen course in international business, establishing a

series of courses focusing on global issues and third integrating international topics into existing courses. Aranda (1991) cites that there is an interest by faculty to promote international business but there is a lack of exposure or support on international business study. Aranda also found a lack of interaction between business schools and the international community. Ball and McCulloch (1993) write, "business schools must internationalize the entire course of study including comparative business practices and foreign languages and the analysis of other countries and cultures."

Fugate and Jefferson (2001) propose that students have not been able to respond to the increasing changes that have occurred due to the fall of communism, technological advances, and increases in economic opportunities. U.S. business schools are also not marketing international business programs very well. European schools respond to the demands of internalization more effectively, according to these authors. Their recommendations are:

1. U.S. based businesses, who have the global expertise must help universities with their programs.
2. The U.S. Government must support internalizing business curriculum.
3. The AACSB accreditation board must take a more active role in setting business schools standards and visit/evaluate these schools.

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4. Business education teacher preparation must ensure faculty development and preparedness for globalization.

What to Do?

According to Kwok and Arpan (1994), there is less opportunity on the masters level to develop international business acumen than on the bachelors degree level. The following discussion will focus on the importance of the study of international business in a graduate degree business program. I will discuss its relevance in the balance of a business curriculum. I would like to offer some assignments, give examples of readings and plan what activities may be used in the classroom. Having just recently completed a masters degree program in business administration and in progress of completing a business education program, I find international business exposure limited. This article offers a few suggestions; many passed on from and tailored from other classes, which I wish to share.

In examining the International Studies academic program at the University of Maine, Farmington, courses in world and cultural geography and global history are featured. These concepts could be incorporated in a masters business course. A simple exercise that I suggest is for instructors in both business administration and business

education to administer a "map challenge" to students to determine their knowledge of the changing world. The instructor will supply maps on various world areas and ask the students to find chosen countries or cities, a "Where in the World?" class project administered to individuals or as teams. Perhaps this would be too simplistic to younger university students but I postulate those older students who learned geography pre 1990's might find this a challenge. A "Jeopardy" team challenge on global history terminology or a crossword puzzle on global business vocabulary could also be handed distributed.

A textbook and associated web site that I recommend is Daniels and Radebaugh International Business Environments and Operations (Ninth Edition) (www.prenhall.com/daniels). The text offers multiple examples of maps that can be used for the aforementioned exercise. The web site is a wealth of information to students and faculty on globalization. True/False, Multiple Choice and Essay examples are offered for study as well as an In The News section on current issues in the global market.

Ball and McCulloch (1993) cite Kohers study for the need of International Marketing, International Finance, International Relations and International Law in business curricula. Internationalism can be featured as stand alone

courses or brought in as specific topic areas in already established law, finance or marketing courses as special topics. Research projects could center on these topics.

Inviting guest speakers from the international business community and faculty who have taught internationally can be a bright spot in any course lecture. Ideally, participation in seminar programs involving travel outside the United States would be invaluable but costly. Visiting professors from the international arena could share their experiences and strengths in other business classes. Fellow students from other countries, local new residents from other countries and guest speakers from embassies could help develop worldmindedness and tolerance of different cultures in the business arena. Any course dealing with "Administration and Supervision in Business Education" could benefit from guest speakers sharing international management variations in comparison to the United States management system

Bailey (1995), in her article looks at the University of Hawaii and its funding of computer technology. Electronic meeting rooms for international exchange of information, and lectures given by distinguished professors of international business on line can be offered. Linking into an international business chat rooms may be suggested

as a class project to strengthen bonds with others from different countries. Boatler (1992) suggests that international business students are more successful when attitudes of tolerance and respect are well developed. As suggested by Thomas Hancock, Ph.D.,(2002) partnerships involving organizations such as Seeds of Peace, an organization involving international students from conflicting countries spending time together during the summer, would be beneficial to learn about international tolerance and respect.

Lawson, White et al. (1998) offer active learning activities. Their first project involved researching the electronic database of the U.S. Commerce, the National Trade Data Bank (NDTB) involving specific countries and their policies. Lawson, White et al also examine an e-mail project involving pairing business students with an American style Eastern European school for cultural comparison and studying purchasing power/currency area. Another project involved a video conferencing business simulation involving business decisions in areas such as production, marketing and finance. A course in business education entitled "Technology for Teachers" or a similar course could work on this international business technology course.

A similar project that I experienced at Southern New Hampshire University involved a country risk group project on assigned countries such as Brazil, Egypt, India, Australia and others. The country's background, current and future economic, financial and political situation was to be researched and presented. Further, it was to be explored to determine if the team, as a World Bank, would approve and recommend, or disapprove a five billion-dollar loan to this country and the rationale behind the team's decision. Food, music, dance, currency, costumes and any other experiences were encouraged. (Dalpour, Spring 2001). The team approach was invaluable in our study of international business. In addition, each week students were required to bring in current news/articles from publications such as Business Week, The Economist, Fortune, Forbes, and Wall Street Journal on economic and political developments in the international business news arena. These were presented for weekly class discussion. White and Griffith (1998) write that case studies and simulations are effective in global education. I enthusiastically agree.
These research projects were invaluable in our study of international business.

A variation on the above and on the syllabus presented by Shahrokh Dalpour, Ph.D.(2001) is to choose a firm that

has international ties/presence or would be considered ethically responsible and develop strategic recommendations for this firm's future. Ethical objectives, corporate mission, competitive analysis, and analysis of strategic functional areas such as finance and management would be explored. (Dalpour, Summer 2001). International business strategy would be studied in context of other areas. Again, current articles were discussed on a weekly basis. Any business education course dealing with "Current Literature in Business Education" could apply the above mentioned business article modules.

These are some general suggestions on how to incorporate international business concepts into graduate curriculum. It appears that incorporating international business elements into core business curriculum will continue to be both a challenge and a necessity, particularly in the changing world environment and educational budget reductions. There are many more creative methods that can be developed and presented. Students need to have an international perspective on business and business education. Adults work in various countries in their lifetimes and may work with administrators and educators in these countries. College instructors at the post secondary level will be required to be more creative

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in ensuring that the features of international business and global perspectives are adequately addressed in their curriculum.

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